



Maasai community members to engage in discussions on their role in combating illegal wildlife trade. Photo: CONNECT/IUCN.

## **EAST AFRICA**

### **CONSERVING NATURAL CAPITAL AND ENHANCING COLLABORATIVE MANAGEMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY RESOURCES IN EAST AFRICA**

The East Africa region is endowed with rich biodiversity and natural resources that transcend national boundaries. These include vast landscapes, iconic wildlife species, watersheds, arable lands, and minerals. Broadly defined as natural capital, these resources are an important source of economic revenue and critical to East Africa's economic growth. The region's nature-based tourism industry, which is almost entirely dependent on wildlife and protected areas, contributes 7.5-10 percent of GDP to the region and supports local communities depending on the natural capital for their livelihoods. However, the current COVID-19 pandemic has hit East Africa's tourism sector hard with a consequent reduction in revenue for protected and conserved areas, including vital support to local community livelihoods.

The purpose of the Conserving Natural Capital and Enhancing Collaborative Management of Transboundary Resources in East Africa (CONNECT) is to strengthen the conservation and management of transboundary natural resources including wildlife and landscapes in the region. The project seeks to strengthen East African Community's institutional leadership and learning to deliver on its regional mandate and commitments to conserve and manage shared environment and natural resources in East Africa. The project works to strengthen and support existing regional conservation initiatives through generating evidence-based information, innovative methodologies, tools, and best practices for the benefit of the EAC Partner States and their citizens.

## OUR WORK

The project activities are geared towards improving conservation and management of natural capital in the East African region. Key intervention areas include:

- Technical assistance to the East African Community to create and implement conservation policies, strategies, and legal frameworks.
- Local community capacity to build community-based tools to combat the illegal wildlife trade.
- Increasing political support on the economic and intrinsic value of wildlife.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Strengthened regional environment and natural resources management policy process for evidence-based decision making.
- Improved sustainable management of key transboundary landscapes.
- Reduced demand for wildlife products.
- Improved regional and bilateral collaboration on the enforcement and prosecutions of wildlife crime.
- Established the Regional Forum for Wildlife Prosecutors in East Africa to enhance wildlife law enforcement in East Africa.
- Strengthened efforts to monitor the trends in bushmeat consumption and trade because of COVID-19.

The project has adopted an adaptive management approach to adjust to the realities of the COVID-19 pandemic in the region. Efforts have focused on virtual meetings and learning exchanges, in lieu of physical meetings, and resources have been directed to activities that specifically focus on impacts of the pandemic on the region's natural capital.

**BUDGET:** USD \$4,900,169

### DURATION

2019-2023

### ACTIVITY LOCATIONS

EAC Member States of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan Tanzania and Uganda and other strategic countries in the region.

### IMPLEMENTING PARTNER

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO)

### KEY PARTNERS

Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network  
Worldwide Fund for Nature  
East African Community

### USAID CONTACT

Brian Otiende  
Program Management Specialist  
Tel: +254-20-363-2012  
Email: [botiende@usaid.gov](mailto:botiende@usaid.gov)

### IUCN CONTACT

Leo Niskanen  
Regional Technical Coordinator  
Conservation Areas and Species Programme  
Tel: +254-20-249-3561/65  
Email: [Leo.Niskanen@iucn.org](mailto:Leo.Niskanen@iucn.org)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

Email: [usaidkea@usaid.gov](mailto:usaidkea@usaid.gov)  
Website: [www.usaid.gov/east-africa-regional](http://www.usaid.gov/east-africa-regional)  
Facebook: USAIDEastAfrica  
Twitter: @USAIDEastAfrica